

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-24 are pending. Claims 1, 2 and 4-24 are amended. Claims 1 and 12 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Examiner Interview / Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner D.H Duong to the Applicants' Representative, Carl T. Thomsen, Reg. No. 50,786, during the telephone interview on May 27, 2008. During the interview, the Examiner pointed out issues to the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. In particular, the Examiner pointed out issues under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, including

- 1) improper antecedent basis issues in independent claims 1 and 12, and
- 2) inconsistencies in elements in several claims as a result of reference numerals being included in each of the independent and dependent claims.

By way of this Amendment each of claims 1, 2 and 4-24 have been amended as discussed with Examiner Duong on May 27, 2008, and as confirmed by telephone on May 30, 2008. As such, the Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. The Applicants now believe that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If, during further examination of the present application, further discussions with Applicants' Representative would advance the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786, at 1-703-208-4030 (direct line) at her convenience.

CONCLUSION

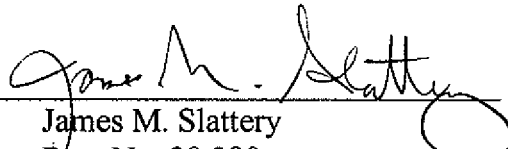
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 208-4030 (direct line).

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Date: June 2, 2008

Respectfully submitted,
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